

PHOTOPLAY THEATRES DANCING MUSIC

LITTLE JOURNEYS TO THE HOMES OF FAMOUS MOVIES

The Inside of the Stanley Theatre and Some of Its Wonders

The inside of a photoplay theatre—how many "fans" really know it? It isn't a big oblong box with a whitewashed wall at one end. It isn't even the elaborate sort of playhouse that the patron of the Stanley takes as a comfortable matter-of-course as he drops his ticket in the box.

Thursday afternoon three newspaper men wandered into the Stanley to see what running a city's premiere "movie" really meant. Before they were through they decided that the Keystone State Construction Company has in many ways a very simple job on its hands digging under City Hall.

Of course, there are some angles any playgoer may catch of the elaborate care that goes into a modern photoplay house. There is nothing to prevent your counting the 21 exits of the Stanley, noting the lights under the arms of the aisle chairs in the balcony which keep the stairs bright, listening with considerable respect to the music of the 15-man orchestra and the great organ, or admiring the luxurious and tasteful appointments of the ladies' parlor, with its engraved writing paper, its magazines, its handsome picture, lamps and furniture.

There are a hundred interesting details here: the automatic adjusters, that slowly twist the carbons into contact as the current sets away their craters; the motor device which the film is fed past the lens at any desired speed from 15 minutes to the reel for drama to 13 or 14 for comedy; the ventilators above and below; the batteries of holes through which the projecting machines fire and the operators watch the screen; and the field glasses for focussing.

Things happen here that no mere "fan" wots of. The moment when the reel of film on one machine ends and that on the next must be so started as to take up the story without a break is fascinating. On the first run of the week, Mr. Cherry has figured out the proper "cues" so to speak, in the pictures, and the operators watch the screen; and the field glasses for focussing.

That is the essential magic of the picture theatre. But there is more, more magic, under-stage, magic that makes up half the charm of a house like the Stanley.

INCIDENTS, EXCITING AND OTHERWISE, IN THE LIVES OF THE STARS AS THE CAMERA CATCHES THEM



THE FIRST NEGRO IAGO John Ramsey, who will play Iago in the all-colored production of Shakespeare's tragedy at the Walnut next week.

Back of the door behind the first boxes waits one Joseph King. He holds a title that will surprise every devotee of the films. Shades of Belasco! he is the Stage Manager. And he has a stage. The Stanley can turn itself into a vaudeville house or even a "legitimate" theatre any day it cares to. "Flies," "gridiron," "footlights," everything is there.

But just now the place looks like some weird sort of dark storeroom, with a watchman's light at the back. By its glow you may make out the plaster back of the screen half-way up stage (the screen, its surface, its curve, by the way, are all matters of long experimentation to secure good projection and no eyestrain). Just under the light stands a wind machine, looking like a blacksmith's bellows; and towering above—the most important and the weirdest magician art ever had—is the pile of organ pipes. Yes, a magician of art, and a crafty one, too. For, maybe, you remember the gilt cylinders in the highest boxes, which you always thought did the work of harmonizing "Carmen." They are nothing but a "front."

But there is more magic to come. For the last step in seeing the inside of a movie theatre is the next. "Want to go inside the organ? One at a time, please." And Mr. King relays you through a little wooden door into a passage just big enough for two. "Swallow deep," he says. Then he punches a hole in the inner door, and, as the valve flaps back, you take a trip to New York via the P. R. R.'s Hudson River tunnel.

A strange place, this air chest of a huge organ. Your ears push with the 147 pounds pressure that is waiting to blow you up into Milton's music overhead. As you look up to see the holes you are sure you would be blown through if the organist started to play, you discover a roof of a million intricacies not six inches over your head—levers, stops, holes, little wooden rods, an orderly tangle, a fantastic forest of mechanism. Eight octaves of eight notes each, three couplers, and to top off that 45 stops—multiply it out and you get some faint notion of the multitude of holes and levers in that roof. Suddenly the music starts, no louder than it sounds in the theatre itself, and the whole roof of this little diviner's bell of a room is a jangling, jiggling, bizzarrerie of motion.

Mr. King is just a bit proud of that organ which he watches. And he is even prouder of the pride of the Stanley—ventilation. "There are 14 intake fans," he says. "To suck fresh air in, and 54 16-inch fans to force the bad air into the false ceiling, and three big and three small exhaust fans to blow it all out of the roof." And as he ushers the newspaper men out the stage door, Mr. Silver points up at a newly plastered cylinder sticking out of the side wall. "There's the new hole I just found a man putting a fan into the other day."

No wonder Manager Katz looks satisfied as he stands beside the boxoffice. But in his heart of hearts he wonders how soon Stanley Mastbaum will find a new place in his pet theatre to poke a fan into.

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JOSEPH URBAN AT WORK The famous scenic designer often creates the statuettes which decorate his stage. On Tuesday New York will see his greatest work, the staging of the monster Shakespeare masque of "Caliban," in the stadium of the College of the City of New York.

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SIX JOLLY FRIARS James J. Corbett, George Primrose, Hap Ward, Will Rogers, Felix Adler and Louis Mann rehearsing one of the scenes they will give us at the Forrest May 29.



Cross and Josephine, of "Town Topics," are strong for summer scenes like this, snapped on their farm.

A BIT OF MOVIE LIFE Rounding a curve in "Pasquale," the new Morosco-Paramount film coming to the Stanley. George Beban's auto did an impromptu somersault, which the camera man caught and which the director utilized by rewriting the scenario.

SHAKESPEARE'S POOR SCENARIOS—E. H. SOTHERN MUCH as I admire the genius of William Shakespeare as a playwright, I do not think he ever wrote a great scenario. The average motion-picture editor would probably turn down his script on the instant because of the fact that the great Bard of Avon was not aware of the photographic possibilities when he wrote his works.

Shakespeare, to be sure, sought and attained the artistic, but the element of action as it applies to motion pictures was, if discernible at all, only partly defined in even his most spectacular plays because he wrote the stage always in mind. The great thoughts he amplified in words will some day be pictured no doubt, when the right man comes to work them over into the form that the photoplay requires.

But I shall not play Shakespeare for the screen, much as I should like to do so, for the simple reason that I fear Shakespeare's productions are not yet ripe for popular favor in the movies and for the reason also that because of the danger to her health I cannot have the co-operation of my wife, Julia Marlowe, with whom it is always a pleasure to appear in the classics. I feel, with all pardonable pride, that she is the only woman who can play the female Shakespearean roles with the proper finesse and spirit to suit me, and I should not care to perform opposite any other woman in the parts which have commanded so much of our joint labors and affection.

Let me set myself right, however, with regard to my opening statement about Shakespearean plays and the pictures. I feel distinctly understood that I do not mean to say that these classics are too elevated in the minds of the motion-picture spectators.

The script is the thing I have in mind.

It comes from Kingston, N. Y., is dated January 6, 1886, and was loaned to the EVENING LEDGER at this time in connection with the recent death of the great singer whose picture it bears. The reader will easily connect the name of Clara Louise Kellogg with that of her manager, printed on the last line. Nelson Franko, it is reported, will open the season at Willow Grove with his orchestra. Mr. Cholmley-Jones, who owns the program, is the suave and affable and altogether superior representative of the Forrest Theatre. A nephew of Max Strakosch is now manager of the Walnut.

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CHARLES AND THE CHILD A character study in curiosity and surprise. Mr. Chaplin will be seen extensively round town next week in his first Mutual release, "The Floorwalker," while his last Essanay, "Police," is at the Stanley.



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WHY SHAKESPEARE AND I ARE STRONG FOR GOOD OLD SLANG

The Verbal Star of "Town Topics" Reflects a Bit on the English Language

By BERT LESLIE Some one once told me that as a murderer of the King's English I take the crown. Well, I don't know that all this honor should come to me, since I am simply one of the many who are trying to idiosyncrasy our cumbersome language. There is George Ade, who first made slang famous; then there is George M. Cohan, who has written his own dictionary, and such authors as Rupert Hughes, who is certainly an expert at it, and even Robert M. Chambers and Booth Tarkington, not to mention the mighty Bernard Shaw.

Some of our most learned authors are fathers of slang expressions. Would it surprise you to know that the expression "Beat it" is from Shakespeare? And, incidentally worth mentioning, since we are celebrating the Shakespearean tercentenary, this same Shakespeare fellow is the author of many of our favorite expressions of slang, only we use them so much that we become accustomed to them and, naturally, incorporate them in our own language.

The advantages of slang are that it does not tie up the tongue. It is not more expressive to say "Beat it" than "Kindly remove yourself from my presence; you are obnoxious to me." And take the expression "Send the track, you are slipping"—it would take a whole paragraph to explain its meaning. Another expressive term is "Get me!" How much easier to say this than, "Do you comprehend my meaning?"

One of the funniest things to me is the horror some people profess to have of slang. And they are, as a rule, the worst offenders. A woman in Detroit, an officer of the Drama League, met me and said, "I'm awfully glad to know you." I told her that was a terrible thing to say to a man on first acquaintance, but I don't suppose she got me. The English are users of slang just as much as we are, but most of their terms are strange to us, as ours are strange to them. For instance, there are some expressions such as "Swank," "Spook," "Squiffy," all of them expressive, but positively meaning nothing in particular to us.

The best medium we have for the exchange of these slang expressions between us is the stage. And that is how and why we are rapidly becoming acquainted with some of their expressions. I know diction and I know grammar, but take it from me, slang is the shortest cut to what you mean every time. Most slang expressions are grammatically correct, but the assumed repugnance which some people seem to bear toward their use would lead to the belief that slang is very ungrammatical. Examine most of the slang expressions which I use in "Town Topics" and you will see that they are all correct. Webster wrote a dictionary, and he has had very little opposition since, as nobody cares to provide him with competition. But one day I am going to call a meeting of the slangers, with George Ade presiding, and then I think we will get up a dictionary of slang so that all who run may read and know.

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